A

PROCLAMATION

To all the Inhabitants of

ENGLAND;

Concerning

Fasting & Prayer

That they may come to a certain Discerning and Knowledge of the Will of God therein, who is KING of the whole Earth, the Higher Power; unto whom all the Powers of the Earth must bow.

With some Directions by way of Information to the End that may be obtained, which hath been greatly wanting in these weighty Concerns (that is)

[*A Right Understanding*]

By Stephen Smith.

Psal. 138. 4. *All the Kings of the Earth shall Praise thee (O Lord) when they hear the words of thy Mouth.*

Vers. 5. *Yea, they shall sing in the Ways of the Lord; for great is the Glory of the Lord.*

Printed in the Year, 167[illegible]

BRITISH MUSEUM

A

PROCLAMATION

By way of

EXHORTATION

Unto all the Inhabitants of *ENGLAND*;

Concerning

Faſting & Prayer

And that they may come to a certain Diſcerning and Knowledge of the Will of God therein (who is King of the whole EARTH.

[*Firſt by way of Preparation unto a True* FAST]

COme all you who expect to be Heard and Accepted of the Living God; Faſting and Prayer, in the Spirit of Holineſs, is required as Neceſſary thereunto: but the want of a certain Knowledge and Diſcerning, how, and in what manner the ſame ought to be Performed (therefore it is) that people are rejected) being all Vain Service and Loſt Labour;

where no Reward is received; or when they ask amiſs, what Anſwer ſhall ſuch have, judge ye. And therefore, be Admoniſhed, I beſeech you, To mind that which gives you a Diſcerning and certain Knowledge in this weighty Work: You may read what the Lord ſaid by his Servant *Iſaiah*, chap. 5. 8. concerning Faſting; and what Chriſt Jeſus ſaid, *Mat.* 6. but how long may People read theſe Sayings (as well as others) and yet have no certain knowledge of the Will of God therein? I ſpeak of ſuch who are out of the way of a True Underſtanding; which all are who are in a bare Confeſſion, with their Mouthes, that God ought to be feared; but the Heart, that not being right in his ſight, Infidelity that taking place there; from whence a Concluſion is drawn, *That Sin, which is Evil, can't be parted with*; this is a great Evil indeed, ſet up in the Heart by the ſpirit of Antichriſt; where a Form of Words, and large Confeſſions concerning God and Chriſt are made; but the Bleſſed and Effectual Workings of God's Spirit in Fleſh, for the Deſtroying of Sin, that being denyed, the Enemy's works (which is Sin and Evil) they continue in the Heart (contrary to the Bleſſed Will of God) by which means the Nobility of Man's Underſtanding that is Clouded and Darkened through Error and Falſhood; by which means the Minds of Mankind are exerciſed in a Brutiſh Underſtanding concerning Spiritual Matters; imagining a Performing of Service to God by confeſſing, *That he ought to be feared*, (and yet live out of what they confeſs in a Talk) *that all Good Succeſs and Bleſſing comes from him, &c.* ſo then, let ſuch be judged by their own words, who confeſs, he ought to be feared, and yet live in Sin and Evil, under a ſtrange Deluſion, *That thoſe Works can never be ſo deſtroyed, as to know Dominion and Freedom from them on this ſide the laying down the Body, or at leaſt, till about that time of ſeparation from all outward viſible things*: ſo here Sin, the Continuance of that hath been pleaded for by them who would be called *Chriſtians*, and would be accounted ſuch who fear God, and that they are in his Service though never expect to be free from ſin; What Service is that in Evil? And what Reward ſhall Evil Works have? Is not ſin an Evil Work of the Evil One? And muſt not the Works of the Evil One, if continued in, have a Bad Reward?

Oh

Oh that people would Fear God in Deed and in Truth! for they that fear him will do no Evil: ſo the way to a Right Underſtanding, that leads quite contrary to ſin & evil: ſo its a ſtrong Deluſion indeed, to expect a Right Underſtanding in an Evil Way; and Preſumption indeed it is, to hope for Good out of your Evil.

Oh, be Awakened to Righteouſneſs, in which there's no ſin! and then will the Eye of the Underſtanding be opened to ſee the Man of ſin, who hath exalted himſelf above that of God in Man, under Confeſſions and Profeſſions of the Name of God and Chriſt, whilſt that ſignified by the Name, which is Power manifeſted in Fleſh, for the revealing the Man of ſin, and deſtroying his works, that hath been denyed by the Exaltation of the Man of ſin in man; by whom Mankind hath been exalted above the Pure Principle of God in man, even above the Light of that Bleſſed and Unerring Spirit of Chriſt, by which that which is reproveable is made manifeſt: but through Unbelief of God's Love therein, Mankind in a great part being held under ſtrong Deluſions of Satan, their minds being exerciſed in a Brutiſh Underſtanding, ſome have called that Bleſſed Principle of God in man, *a Deviliſh Light*; and others, *a Bewildering Light*, or *a Natural Light*; ſo that all that is of God in man that hath been denyed (whoſe Work do you think this is?) But if it were ſo, as the Wicked One in the wicked hath concluded, may it not be ſaid now, as it was in dayes of old, after God had created Mankind upon the Earth, and they had corrupted their Wayes, which diſpleaſed God, who in his Diſpleaſure ſaid, *My Spirit ſhall not alwayes ſtrive, &c.* then was not Deſtruction nigh? but in that there was a time in which God's Holy Spirit did ſtrive with fleſh, it plainly appears, the Good-will of God was therein to have had it otherwiſe; but Mankind reſiſting his Way of bringing it to paſs, the Way of Salvation that was removed, and a Way of Deſtruction let in; ſo the Way of Salvation then that was by the moving and working of God's Good Spirit, the which had place in *Noah*, who was a Perfect Man in his day, who being moved in a True Fear of God had a Right Underſtanding, in which he was a Preacher according to the Will of God: ſo

that

that Bleſſed Spirit of God, by which *Noah* had regard and was acted by, though it was rejected by Mankind in their corrupt Wayes, yet it was not *Deviliſh* nor *Natural*, as Mankind in their Brutiſh Underſtanding in great Meaſure have concluded: but the leaſt meaſure of that pure Principle of God in Mankind of his Bleſſed Spirit, is Unerring; the which in meaſure, in all Ages, in God's Time and Seaſon did ſtrive in Mankind, and for the good of Mankind, that through it they might have been Preſerved out of Corrupt Wayes and Works, which Corrupt Wayes and Works was and is the Cauſe of all Heavy and Grievous Judgments in Ages paſt, and to come upon Mankind: So its plain and evident, how Gracious, Merciful and Long-ſuffering God hath been throughout all Ages through ſome meaſure of the ſhining of the Light of his Unerring Spirit, notwithſtanding the Great and Grievous Provocations of Mankind in their Corrupt Wayes, by which their Underſtandings were and are darkened, that they could not come to a clear Diſcerning what manner of Love of God that was unto them (as it is written) *How oft is the Candle of the Wicked put out*, Job 21. So its plain, that was and is the Love of God in the Light of his Unerring Spirit, by which the Wicked were ſhewn their Wickedneſs in all Ages; and the putting that Love from them was, and is the Cauſe that the Wicked periſh in their Wickedneſs, through the Hardneſs of their Hearts, and Unbelief of the Love of God in his Bleſſed Principle of Light, which ſhines ſometimes even unto the Wicked, though they cry, *Depart, I deſire not the Knowledge of thy Wayes:* And though this Wickedneſs of the Wicked, under many fair Pretences of Confeſſions and Profeſſions of God, have labour'd to put away the Way of the Lord, and through many Wicked Devices hath the Wicked One in his Agents, in their Wickedneſs, ſet up many Corrupt Ways; yet the Way of the Lord remains Pure forever, and can never be Corrupted, but it remains a True Witneſs againſt all Evil and Corrupt Wayes whatſoever. And this Perfect Way of God was the Way of the Upright in Heart in all Ages, by which they were led out of Evil (though under more Servitude) before the fulneſs of time, when it pleaſed God ſo to cauſe his

Light

Light to ſhine forth in Fleſh, in an abſolute perfect Dominion over all the Luſts of the Fleſh, where Satan could get no Enterance, though Forty Dayes Chriſt Jeſus was Tempted by him; ſo herein was the Son, who is Heir of all, manifeſted. So all the true Prophets in all Ages, they had their Teſtimony from a meaſure of the Light of that Spirit; and there their Teſtimony ended (who were Faithful) and the Law written in Tables of Stone, that was by the Light of that Bleſſed Spirit, by which all might ſee and learn to come to Chriſt, in whom the Law is fulfilled: So here is the Prophet, whom *Moſes* ſpoke of, that God would raiſe up, whom all is to hear; and every Soul that will not hear that prophet, Deſtruction attends it.

So let none ſay in their Hearts, *Who ſhall aſcend into Heaven*, that is, *to bring this Prophet Chriſt from above?* or, *Who ſhall deſcend into the deep*, that is, *to bring up Chriſt again from the Dead?* For the Word is nigh, even in the Heart and Mouth; which Word of Faith the Miniſters which were True did preach, and them which are True do preach; and herein is the Labour of them whoſe Abiding is in the Word, that others may be turned to the Word in the Heart and Mouth, that by it they may be reconciled unto God: And this Bleſſed Word was in the beginning, before words were; *all things being made by him, in whom is Life, & the Life was* (and is) *the Light of Men*, who believe therein: And though the World did not, nor doth not know the Love of God herein, yet he was and is in the World; and though his Appearance was and is rejected by moſt, yet ſome did and do receive him, who felt and feel his Bleſſed Power to overcome the Luſts of the Fleſh, which is Sin and Evil; which Unſpeakable Love of God, ſhed abroad in the Hearts of the Primitive *Chriſtians*, by this Free Gift of his Holy Spirit, which made them who received the ſame, who were truly ſenſible of God's Love therein, undergo great and grievous things, ſome things of which may be read in the Scriptures of Truth. So their Faſting and Prayers being performed by the Movings and Guidnigs of that Bleſſed Principle of God, how were ſuch preſerved by the Power of God, in the Peace of God, wherein their Souls reſted in God? So the Bleſſed Name of the Lord was unto them a ſtrong Tower (which was the ſame to the Righteous in all Ages) but never

was a more clearer Diſcerning thereof then in this Age; there being a Cloud of Witneſſes of the Everlaſting Love of the Everlaſting God herein: and ſo they are Bleſſed who live up to that Bleſſed Principle of God in them, and continue Faithful to the End in the Teſtimony thereof; O the Remembrance of them will be had in great Eſteem in Ages and Generations to come.

So now, that which is Chiefeſt of all, and of greateſt Value, let that be firſt minded, that all things may be done according to the Will of God; in order to which a Right Underſtanding is neceſſary, the which is better then *Gold* or *Silver*; for the Wicked may poſſeſs *Gold* and *Silver*, and things viſible to their Hurt, where a Right Underſtanding is wanting; for if Knowledge and Underſtanding be wanting, people periſh: Therefore be adviſed to wait in the Way of Underſtanding the Fear of the Lord God, who made Heaven, and Earth, the Sea, and all things elſe according to his good Pleaſure; here is the beginning of Knowledge, and to attain to a Right Underſtanding: for, in the Fear of the Lord there's no Evil in that VVay. So away with Inventions and Imaginations of *Fearing God*, whilſt Concluſions are made, *That Sin can't be parted with*; all wayes made up by men in Sin is from a Corrupt Underſtanding: So come to the Fear of God, and he will teach us his Wayes; and all that come there come out of Evil; for there's no Evil in God's Wayes: ſo that they that are in God's Way, are out of Evil; by which it plainly appears, that all Wayes where Concluſions are made, *That Sin, is in them*; or, *that they can't live out of Sin*; or, *that they know not a Way out of Sin*; all ſuch, where ſuch Concluſions are made, are out of a Right Underſtanding, and their Wayes are Deſtructive, and their Works in them Wayes are Deſtructive, and their Lives in them Wayes are Deſtructive, ſo that all who endeavour to ſave their Lives there, do want a Right Underſtanding; for Tranſgreſſion, which is Sin, is the Cauſe of Death; ſo all that are raiſed from Death, are raiſed from Sin, the Cauſe of it: ſo then, all that keep their Lives there, ſhall loſe Life; and all that loſe their lives there, ſhall find Life: ſo Bleſſed are they who ſerve the Living God, they do as they ſhould do; ſo that's

no

no Evil (but Good) ſo let none think in their Perverſe Wayes, that they ſhall be fed with Knowledge and Underſtanding there (No, no) they will Starve and Periſh there for want of Underſtanding: ſo let all deal clearly with themſelves, in coolneſs and ſtillneſs, in the ſilence of fleſhly wiſdom, in a true Examination concerning the wayes they live in, and let that which is Wrong be Rejected, and that which is Right Received; and in that which is Right will be ſeen what Faſt is Pleaſing and Acceptable in God's ſight; and that Prayer which will be Effectual and Prevalent for the Good of the ſoul in a Right Underſtanding will be ſeen: So now, begin a Faſt; come, pitty the Oppreſſed; let the Priſoner go free; have Compaſſion on the Poor; break off Iniquities by a True Repentance, in turning from Evil, the Cauſe of Anguiſh and Trouble upon the ſoul, that the ſoul may be ſet at Liberty to praiſe the Lord; and ſo let hard hearts be melted & broken down, and the ſeat of Unbelief, by reaſon of which the Love of God in the Light of his Son is rejected, and by that means poor ſouls are kept in Bondage contrary to the Will of God, let that ſeat of Unbelief be thrown down; for God is greatly diſpleaſed at the Preſumption of Mankind, who have exalted themſelves in their own wills, where Self exerciſeth Will-worſhip in a feigned Humility, whereby the Croſs is counted Fooliſhneſs. So Chriſt's Exhortation, *To take up the Croſs daily, and deny Self*, God's Love therein that is ſleighted; the Croſs that being without, Faſting that being without, Prayers that being without, all being done without a Right Underſtanding; for want of which Pretended Faſting is vain, Prayer is vain, and the Converſation of Mankind is vain and unprofitable, where the will of man is ſet in Oppoſition againſt the Will of God in his Heavenly Gift, even the Light of his Unerring Spirit, by which the VVorld is reproved of Evil: and this is and will be the VVorld's Condemnation, Their ſleighting the many Viſitations of God's Love, in that he doth manifeſt unto them what is reprovable in his ſight; but they being unmindful of God's Love therein, by which means their ſouls are in great Bondage under Sin and Corruption; ſubjected there under a vain

Hope by the Subtilty of the Serpent, *That though they live unſeparated from Sin, yet they ſhall obtain Juſtification through Chriſt, and ſo ſee a good End, or Good brought forth though Sin be never finiſhed*; this kind of Perſwaſion is through ſtrong Deluſions of Satan, whoſe workings are in a deep Myſtery of Iniquity in pretended Godlineſs; but his End therein is, to make void that Bleſſed Coming of the Lord and Saviour to finiſh Sin, and to put an End to Unrighteouſneſs, and thereby to make way for the bringing in Everlaſting Righteouſneſs, that ſouls in that bleſſed Principle of God may reſt in Peace.

Now where this is not known, be Awakened, I beſeech you, unto Righteouſneſs, which is God's, and no otherwayes man's, but as he becomes ſtript of his own Righteonſueſs as well as Wickedneſs, and ſo becomes Poor in his own Eyes, and ſo comes before the Lord with a Broken and Contrite Spirit, and a Heart humbled at his Sight, who ſearcheth it by his Light, and ſhews to man in the Cool of the Day what beaſtly Imaginations are lodging therein; to the end, that man might lie down at the Feet of his Appearance in a True Faſt, in abſtaining from Evil; and Praying in the Spirit, that by the Exerciſe of God's Love in his ſtriving therewith, Evil may be overcome, and ſo the ſoul ſet at liberty from Evil, the cauſe of Trouble and Anguiſh, which is upon every ſoul that's in Evil.

So let every one that names the Name of the Lord depart from Evil. Come *Curſer* and *Swearer*, be perſwaded to be awakened, and ſee what a ſad Condition thy ſoul is in: but if thou wilt not, but hardeneſt thy heart, what will the taking the Name of the Lord into thy Mouth avail thee? Or Unclean Perſon, who art defiled, & endeavouring to defile others, remember, *That none in Uncleanneſs can enter into Heaven*; ſo except thou leaveſt thy Evil therein, thy Expectations of God's Kingdom will fail thee.

Come Idolaters, who are making Godds of Gold, and Silver, and Wood, and Stone, and ſo are bowing down to the Works of your own hands; that is a great Abomination and Evil, greatly to be lamented, who are ſo far blinded from the Appearance of the Light of God's Spirit in your own Hearts; which being taken heed unto and obeyed, brings to the Knowledge of God;

but

but that Love of God being rejected, what Strangers are you to God, and the Saints Life? and so are become Beastly and Brutish in your Understandings, your Bands of Corruption through Sin and Iniquity being made strong; and so under strong Delusions are bowing to Pictures to put you in mind of God and the Saints, though they cannot hear, nor see, nor smell: what savour think you to get out of them *Stocks* and *Stones?* Be Awakened, I beseech you, to Consideration; and know, that its some measure of that Grace and Truth which Jesus of *Nazareth* was filled with; by Vertue of that all the Saints were a good Savour to God, and one unto another; which Grace hath appeared to all, but the Saints or Believers were and are taught by it: so that which convinces of Evil is, to them that believe in it and obey it, an Instructer in the Way of Life. So leave your Folly in Bowing and Cringing to the *East*, and to you know not what; and answer the Love of God in his Principle of Light in you, which makes manifest that which is Evil; and then will the Eye of your Understanding be opened, to the beholding of him who fills Heaven and Earth with his Presence, so that no Darkness can cover man from him, who is God of the *North*, *South*, *East* and *West*; who will spoil your glorying, who are boasting your selves of the Antiquity of your Religion, who first went from the Cross, which is the Power of God, and so got up in a form of words, and then set the Cross upon the Houses of *Stone*, *&c.* Alas! Your Religion is seen through; and all who hang upon your Skirts, they must have a share of the Shame which is coming upon that Adulterated Whorish spirit, which hath led the minds of people out from a sense of the Royal Law of God within man, so that the Stream of God's Love therein to Mankind, that hath been stopt; and in the Night of Apostacy the stream of Malice, and Envy and Hatred, that hath run in your streets, where the Innocent Bloodshed lies at your Doors. So its time you were Awakened to a True Repentance, that you may come to the Knowledge of Salvation through the Remission of your sins: for its the saving of your souls, I seek, and not the Destruction of your Bodies; so Truth is my Weapon, which I desire may reach to that of God which is Truth in you; that so the Pure Language, which

is Truth, may be reſtored in all; and the Royal Law of Love therein may ſhew it ſelf, which gives an Underſtanding, *To love God above all, and our Neighbours as our ſelves, and to do to all men as we would they ſhould do unto us.*

Come all you who conceive Miſchief on your Beds in your hearts, and can't reſt till you bring it forth into action; now conſider what manner of Evil this is, which though it may be covered for a time, if continued in, Ruin and Deſtruction is in the way thereof.

Come you who live in Pride and Idleneſs, following the Luſt of the Eye, the Luſt of the Fleſh and Pride of Life, who live in Fulneſs of Bread and Wantonneſs, Feaſting and making Merry over the Pure Principle of God in you; this is a great Evil: therefore be admoniſh'd to mind that of God in you, and Watch and Pray in the ſame, that ſo by that which is good of God the Evil may be overcome, and the Root and Ground judged from whence all Evil ſprings.

Come all you Drunkards and Gluttenous Perſons, who waſte and ſpoil the good Creatures, which are appointed for the neceſſary uſe of Mankind; read what is written in *Iſa.* 5. 11, 12. What a miſerable life are you in who are attended with Wo and Miſery, who are ſo far ſeparated from the Love of God in his Son, and the Dominion that is therein to uſe and order all things aright, according to the Will of God? For want of this Knowledge how are many overcome with *Strong Drink*? the which having Dominion, how are many thereby Unmanned of that Natural Ability of a man, and ſo lie liable to other Temptations, whereby the ſoul lies in Bondage? Come now, be perſwaded to mind that Love of God which in the Cool, when the Drink is out, ſhews you what a great Evil this is; which if not departed from, Ruin is in that Way both of Soul, Body and Eſtate.

Come you Gameſters of all ſorts, who ſpend your time in Gaming and Sports, who are coveting an Increaſe by ſuch Unequal and Unjuſt Wayes, and many ſpending their time in ſuch Practices: How many Families are Ruined by ſuch a Courſe of Life? and what an evil Example do Parents thereby ſhew to their Children and Families? This is a great Evil, ſuch being an ill favour who are living therein, both to God, and Man who fears God.

There-

Therefore be admoniſhed, to break off theſe Evils by a True Repentance, and learn to redeem Time, that a Change may be witneſſed (before you go from hence) by vertue of the Power of Chriſt, which often moves againſt Evil: ſo let not the Juſt always be reſiſted by the Unjuſt; but if the Juſt Principle of God be minded and joyned unto, then will the Unjuſt be overcome, and the Juſt ſet up; in which all that dwell will be a good Savour in their day, and a good Example to all.

Come all you who are Exalting a falſe Birth, where your Ears are ſtopt, and your Eyes are cloſed, ſo that you have neither heard, nor ſeen nor handled that which was from the beginning; even that Word of Life (which Everlaſting Life was with the Father, and was and is manifeſted to Believers) from whence Teſtimony is given of God's Love therein, where the true Fellowſhip is witneſſed in the Bleſſed Light of God; which all you, who are exalting a Falſe Birth, do deſpiſe, and ſpeak very evilly of, or at leaſt, very ſleightly; So the True Heir hath been rejected, and not thought fit to raign; having been called by you who are exalting the Falſe and Untimely Birth, either a *Devil* (which ſome have called him;) and others, *Natural*, or a *Fool*: by which it may be ſeen, how the Serpent's Wiſdom hath been ſet by, by the Adultereſs, who would fain have her Baſtard to be Heir; for which End how ſeemingly fair hath the Harlot Trimmed and Decked her ſelf? being arrayed in Purple and Scarlet, and decked with Gold, and Pretious Stones and Pearls; her Religion being in her Head, from whence Abominations are let into the Heart; where if the Light appear to ſearch it, it is mocked and ſleighted by *Iſhmael*: So that falſe Prophet he is ſet up, who cryes out, *No Revelation now*; ſo the Deceitful Heart being after the Falſe Prophet, groſs Darkneſs that covers: ſo the Love of God, in the Bleſſed Appearance of the Light of his Unerring Spirit, that is not comprehended; ſo the Eye hath not ſeen, nor the Ear heard, neither hath it entered into their hearts, the Mercies and Goodneſs of God, which is to them that fear him, and love his Appearance in the Heart, where the Light of his Bleſſed Spirit doth ſhew forth his Goodneſs, from whence is miniſtered forth Life and Strength to the poor ſoul, ſtrengthning it againſt the Appearances of Evil: ſo the Soul being made

ſenſible

ſenſible of the Peace of God, and Reſt through the Revelation of his holy Spirit, which cauſes Joy and Gladneſs to the Soul; having found a Friend in its Adverſity, it ſets a high Value and Eſteem of him, and is willing to be guided and directed by him. So the Harlot is ſeen, and the Falſe Birth is ſeen, and the Falſe Prophet which ſteals the True Prophets words is ſeen: ſo the Adulteress may Cry long enough, and Scold long enough, and Peep and Mutter, all her Whinings in ſeeming Prayers, and Teachings and Doctrines all end in Filthineſs and Sin in her Beſt Duties; and yet this Impudent Harlot concludes, *There is none like her; and her birth is the True Birth; and all the reſt are Falſe:* But her Deceit is manifeſt, and her Sorceries and Witchcraft is ſeen; and a Bed of Torment is prepared for her: So they are Bleſſed that fear the Living God, and ſanctifie him in their Hearts, who do not commit Leudneſs with the Harlot, nor add any thing to the maintaining of her Gallentry.

Come all you Ranters, who have gotten ſome words of Truth, but do uſe them in an exalted ſpirit, in which you are ſwiming up and down above the Pure Stream, which flows from the Pure Meek Principle of God, the Nature of the Water of Life, which comes from the Fountain of all Good, that being to drive away all Filthineſs of Fleſh; where that hath paſſage it refreſhes and keeps all Green and Freſh, in a good Savour to God and man. But you Ranters having loſt its Savour are exalted above that which is lowly and good, being under a great Imagination of a Knowledge of Good and Evil, on which, through the Subtilty of the Serpent you feeding are become dead to any true ſenſe of the Vertue that flows from the living Power, from whence through Diſobedience you being ſhut out: What a do are you making? ſome crying out againſt Meetings, as *formal*; *and that you feel not the Power that was amongſt them:* which indeed is no wonder, when you are paſt feeling; and ſo being toſſed up and down in your Minds in an exalted ſtate, ſome appearing in a ſingular pretended Zeal, under a voluntary Humility, as if you were Wiſer and Holier then others (the Serpent here having puft up) ſets a judging the Body, and feeds his Members who waits for Hurt, as by the ſlipping of ſome through Weakneſs, or the like

like, and ſo gets all Occaſions of making Parties and Rents, ſtill the Serpent being covered under a Pretence of a Higher Attainment; but at length, after ſome time of Exerciſe in this Work, and through the Everlaſting Love of God to the Body, in preſerving it Sound and Intire, where his Will is done, and a ſight given of the Enemy's working therein, and ſo not able to prevail: at length many go out in Deſtraction to Meetings, and there make ſad Noiſes, to prevent (if poſſible) the going forth of the Declaration of Truth, as much as in them lies; keeping people from a Reception thereof by their Babbling and Squalling to Diſturb Meetings, it having plainly appeared. But their Nouriſhment being from the Vine of *Sodom*, Diſobedience to that which they might be convinced of, being the Cauſe from whence the firſt going out was; ſo the Root being Corrupt, the Fruit is Corrupt: ſo all in time grow Dry and Withered, being an Ill Savour therein, and a Stink whilſt they live herein upon Earth; ſo that both the Way and End in that Way is Deſtructive. The which may ſerve for a Warning to all who are convinced of the Truth, to take heed how they ſleight God's Love therein, in Diſobeying that Principle of God in them, which is Meek and Lowly; and all that live in true Obedience to it, they live in ſafety, where Evil in Uncleanneſs cannot enter, nor Haughtineſs hath no place there; but they that anſwer that Bleſſed Principle, they riſe in its Nature to hate Uncleanneſs and Haughtineſs; ſo in its Nature of Meekneſs and Lowlineſs, all who grow here bring forth Good Fruit, which is a Bleſſed Savour in his Sight, who is Creator of all; and all who are grafted into this Root, and abiding therein, do feel Sap and Nouriſhment from the ſame, whereby they ſping, grow and flouriſh in a Green, Lively, Senſible Life of the Exerciſe of God's Love to loſt Mankind; and ſo dare not appear otherwayes in the ſight of men, then they ſtand approved in his Sight who ſees all things: and ſo, meeting together to wait upon him, who hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, all gathering together in his Bleſſed Name, feeling true Refreſhment in his Preſence; Strength thereby is renewed to love God above all, and to love one another, and to watch for the

Good

Good in one another; and to teſtifie againſt the Evil, which may be an Occaſion of Defiling or Hurting any; ſtill Waiting in Meekneſs and Love, to the end the Good may be preſerved, and that which is Evil beſt reſiſted: And though this Love by many may be rejected, yet it is that which will carry them who are exerciſed therein above the Head of all Oppoſition; and preſerve them who keep their Habitation therein out of all Extreams, even to finiſh their Courſe with Joy and Peace in that Crown of Life which is Everlaſting.

Come all you who live in Envy, Hatred, Malice, Strife and Contention, *Maſters* and *Dames* of *Families*, who are in Brawlings, and Evil and Raſh Speakings, and Diſcontents; theſe Fruits proceed from a Corrupt Curſed Ground; and ſo is an Ill Savour and Bad Example to your Families: This is a great Evil.

And all Children who are Stubborn, and Heady, who do not Obey your Parents, as it is meet in the Lord: This is a great Evil.

And all Servants who are not Subject and Obedient in your ſeveral places, but are High-minded, and cannot bear Reproofs; but are ready to Anſwer again, and to be Diſquiet. and Murmur, and Whiſper, and to tell Tales to ſtir up Anger and Strife: This is a great Evil.

NOw to the good in every particular is this writ, even that good Principle of God; by which, if taken heed to, its Nature is, to make manifeſt that which is Evil; and it will not in the leaſt agree with any thing that is Evil: This is a Pearl indeed, which the Earthly mind and wiſdom hath kept people from the knowledge of (but the Way of the Upright, which was and is out of Evil) And ſo the Fear of Offending God, by Obeying his good Gift, that is Good, and out of Evil; which is a true and right Way to a clear underſtanding what to Abſtain and Faſt from, and what to Pray in and for according to the Will of God. So a Teſtimony of the Everlaſting Love of God in his Way, which is Perfect, many have received, where the Eye of the Underſtanding hath been opened, from which that is ſeen which was in the beginning (even the Word of Life) in which there's no Evil: ſo its Good and Juſt that this be confeſſed to before men, and great Evil to deny it; ſo its the Good which is of God, by which all Evil is overcome: ſo Bleſſed are they who overcome the Evil by the Good, and ſo are built and eſtabliſhed through the good Word of God; by which the ſoul being freed from Bondage and Corruption in ſin and evil, from which the ſoul being ſet at Liberty, oh the Unſpeakable Love of God herein in his Son, manifeſted to Deſtroy the Devil's Works, which is ſin and evil; here is Freedom through the Son of God's Love in Deed and Truth: ſo that Scripture is fulfilled, *If the Son ſets free, then are you free indeed*; whoſe Bleſſed Freedom is out of ſin and evil.

So the Bleſſed End of the Everlaſting Love of God, in his coming in the Light of his Unerring Spirit of Life and Power, to finiſh Sin, and put an End to Tranſgreſſion, this is ſeen and known to be the Richeſt and Choiceſt of his many Mercies to Mankind; the which Mercy of God being rejected, or obſtructed through the Vain Imaginations and Evil Wayes ſet up by man's wiſdom in the fallen eſtate from a Right Underſtanding; where Concluſions are made, *That Sin cannot be Overcome:* I ſay

to all ſuch who are at eaſe under that Concluſion, they are fled to Lying Vanities, where being from a ſenſe of God's Mercies in his Son, and there dwelling and abiding, their Habitation is in Darkneſs, their Faſting is in Darkneſs, their Prayers are in Darkneſs, their Fellowſhip is in Darkneſs, and their Profeſſions and Confeſſions of God and Chriſt are in Darkneſs, where they know not what they ſay, or what they do, being in Darkneſs; and there reading the Teſtimony of the holy Men of God, they are quite blind to what the Will of God is therein: ſo through Darkneſs the Way of God that being hid, how many wayes have been ſet up in the Dark? the Eye, that ſhould ſee, that being ſhut; and the Ear, that ſhould hear, that being ſtopt; the Vultures Eye, that being open, which could never ſee the Way of God: ſo people under groſs Darkneſs, being led about there by the Vulterous Eye, an Evil Eye; how are they on heaps about the words, being on heaps in Parties? ſo heaps in Parties being up, one Party cries out, *Lo Here*; another, *Lo There*: and ſo many Parties with their *Lo Here*, and *Lo there*, are ſet up; one Party crying out, *Stand further off my Way of Building and Faſhioning in Profeſſions and Confeſſions of God and Chriſt is better and more Righteous then thine*: another Party climbing up another way, cries down that Faſhion, and ſets up a more ſingular Way of Pretended Righteouſneſs; then, *Stand further off*; *my Way of Confeſſion and Profeſſion is beſt of all* (till another riſes from the ſame Imaginary Ground) and ſo being blind in that Eye which ſhould ſee; and in that wretched Condition, having put Evil for Good, and Good for Evil; and Light for Darkneſs, and Darkneſs for Light; and ſo in the Darkneſs and Evil, what Labour and Pains have the Heaps of Parties taken to make Darkneſs Light, ſtriving by all the Arts and Means imaginable to Eclipſe and Darken the Light of the Son, And for the effecting their Deſigns, what Curious Workmen in Flouriſhing, and Painting, and Daubing and Smothing have the many Parties ſet up? being herein agreed, as plainly appears, *That Darkneſs muſt be Light*; *and whoſoever ſpeaks to the contrary, they all wonder at that Work*: For ſay the ſeveral Parties in effect, *Though indeed we do much differ in our Faſhions in Confeſſions and Profeſſions, and therein do*

many

many times quarrel, and fall out, to the ſhedding of much Blood, as by Experience is known; yet in this we do much agree [in ſpurning againſt the Light which lighteth all Mankind.] And though Chriſt ſaid, *I am the Light of the World*; and though God be called, *Light*; and though it be ſaid, *In him is Life, and the Life is the Light of Men*; and, *That God, who is Light, ſearcheth the Heart, &c.* and though thoſe who miniſtred from Chriſt did, by their Declarations and Writings, *endeavour to turn People to the Light* (to God, who is Light) and though he be the *Father of Lights*, and all that are begotten by him are begotten by his Light, and brought forth into the Light, which ſhining in the heart, clears the Underſtanding of Darkneſs & Error; and though *what is reprovable be made manifeſt by the Light (Immanuel* (God who is Light with his People) Notwithſtanding all this, and much more that is upon record, how ignorant are the many Sects and Parties of this way, by reaſon of the eſteem they have of Darkneſs; wherein they being ignorant of God's Righteouſneſs, how in their Blind Zeal do they go about to eſtabliſh their own wayes and righteouſneſs, and though no better then filthy Rags? So Darkneſs that being over people, and in the Dark, corrupt ways being ſet up, from whence ſin is let into the Heart, and ſo the ſoul is in Bondage to Corruption, the Religions being in the head, how Giddy are theſe Sects and Parties, turning and wheeling about, cringing and bowing at every turn, the Sting of the Venemous Beaſt that being nouriſhed in the heart by the Unbeliever; concluding, where he takes place, *That it is a Dangerous Principle to hold forth ſuch a Way that is out of Sin*, or *to tell of Perfection*? which Darkneſs and Blindneſs of theirs, under many fair Shews of Profeſſions, what ſtrange Effects have been brought forth? through theſe many Sects and Parties, in their wayes, by which they are blinded, and can't ſee God's Way, which is Truth, in which there is no Error (therefore Perfect) but for want of the Knowledge of this, I ſay, what ſtrange Effects have been brought forth by the many Sects and Parties? whoſe ſtrength hath been an Arm of Fleſh, the which, whilſt one Party hath been ſtrongeſt in, how have they ſhown it, in ſuppreſſing and keeping down the others? but Giddineſs being through

the Religions, being in the Head, a time of turning round again coming, how hath another Party exercised the same power, and so one after another? A Corrupt Fountain of Imaginations and Inventions being opened amongst the Apostates from the Truth, How in this Night of Darkness hath Envy, Malice and Hatred run currently, and drove Meekness, Holiness and Truth quite out of doors? so the Way of Truth that having been out, the Commandment that was given forth in the Way of God, *To love him above all, and one another*, that hath been out; the Sects and Parties having been blinded through sin, in that blind *Sodomites* estate, how have they (who have had the Names of *Christians*) been groping and feeling for the Door which lets into Peace? but let them bring forth their Experiences after Twenty, Forty, Sixty Years Tryal, some more, some less; and don't think to cover your selves any longer with telling what you read of others Experiences, whilst you are Resisting the Just Pure Gift of God; for a Day of Search Is come, and coming: So Wo to them that cover, but not with God's Spirit.

So all you *Blind Guides*, who are leading the Blind, you must needs fall into the Pit of Destruction together, if you do not Repent of your Evil in resisting the Just Principle of God in you. So do not think by your twining and twisting in your wise Definitions or Destinctions about Evil, whilst you put *Good* for *Evil*, that you shall mend the matter thereby; for *Good* is *Good*, and that's of *God*, from whence all Good comes; and *Evil* is *Evil*, and that's of the *Devil*, from whence all Bad comes: So Plain-Dealing is a Jewel, which many Honest Hearts have sought for, and have waited on God to be seasoned therewith, which makes savoury in his sight who is Creator of all, a Mighty Power over all, whom all the Ministers of Christ turned People to, that they might not continue in Darkness, nor under Satan's power; but that they might know his Light who hath all Power in Heaven and Earth, and so to live subject under this Higher Power, by which Power the True Eye comes to be opened; and by a True Understanding is witnessed God's Love to the

World

World in his Son Christ Jesus, and what manner of Love that was in that Blessed Act, in Suffering without the Gates of *Jerusalem*; so in the same Will which was the Sanctifier of Believers, Believers now are sanctified and cleansed from Evil, to make mention of the Name of the Lord in Truth and Righteousness, in which there's no Evil. *So let him that names his Holy Name depart out of Evil, lest the good Spirit of God leave striving with him, and so the Soul be sealed down in Evil, where Tribulation and Anguish will never have an End.*

Come therefore, be awaken'd, I beseech you, unto Righteousness, *and Repent with that Repentance never to be repented of*, in ceasing to do Evil: and let the Example of *Nineveh* be before you, *Jonah* 3. 8,9,10. *Cry Mightily unto God; yea, let them turn every one from his Evil Way, and from the Violence that is in their hands; who can tell if God will turn, and repent, &c. And God saw their Works, that they turned from their Evil Way, and God repented of the Evil that he had said, that he would do unto them, and he did it not.*

So this by the way; Fast as long as you will, Pray as long as you will, Cry as loud as you will, if Evil be not turned from, all will be Vain: So Evil, that is within man, and God's Love hath been to make it manifest by the Light of his Spirit within; so man being Convinced of, and Reproved for Evil, if he heeds not Reproofs, but perishes in his Evil, then his Destruction is of himself; but if through this Love of God, shed abroad in the Hearts of People, they be Awaken'd thereby, and so cleave to the Good, and follow and obey it, then will that which was a Reprover for Evil be an Instructer in a Blessed Life, where Sin nor Evil can't enter (nor be) neither is there any Agreement with Darkness in that Life in which there's no Evil; but the Soul being in this Liberty, then, *Come, I will tell you what the Lord hath done for my Soul; and my Soul, and all that's in me praises the Lord.* So here's the Blessed Fountain opened, where the Streams of God's Love are felt to run, which drive back the streams of Malice, Uncleanness and Abominations, which have corrupted Mankind. So Blessed are they whose Eyes are to the Living Fountain, and wait for the rising of the Springs thereof in their Hearts, from whence the truly Thirsting Soul comes to be satisfied, refreshed

and

and ſtrengthened, through a true ſenſe of the ſpringing up of this Well of Water, which he gives who hath all power in Heaven and Earth; the which Well of Water ſpringing unto Everlaſting Life, all being dipped or plunged under this, the ſoul comes to be waſhed from Corruption, and ſo made White as Snow; the which is an Everlaſting Ordinance, ordain'd of God for a perpetual Covenant; the which all that would know Salvation through the Remiſſion of Sins, they muſt wait to be confirmed in this bleſſed Covenant, where the bleſſed Unity ſtands out of ſin; for there's no Evil in this Covenant: ſo all that come to be concerned here, muſt firſt agree in their Hearts to Ceaſe from Sin and Evil, and then to wait for the riſing of the Pure, and ſo to watch in the Pure againſt all Appearances of that which is corrupt, and ſo to grow up in the Pure to a Bleſſed Dominion over the corruptible; and ſo in the pure Meaſure of God's Spirit to receive and uſe the Creatures of God with Thankſgiving, where every Creature is good when they are ſo received: ſo to the Pure all things are Pure; but to the Defiled and Unbelieving there is nothing Pure: ſo the Way of God, that is Pure and Undefiled; and Bleſſed are they who are Undefiled (and keep (and are kept) in that bleſſed Way to finiſh their dayes, where the ſoul reſts in Peace with God, the which is the Will of God (according to which is this writ) So to Him be Glory and Honour, from the riſing of the Pure of Himſelf, forever and forever. *Amen.*

By a Servant of the Lord,

25SE60 Stephen Smith.

THE END.